

OPEN SPACE COUNCIL
September 14, 2018
9:00 a.m.
Tatnall Buildingⁱ
150 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd S
Dover, Delaware

ATTENDANCE

Council Members:

John R. Schroeder, Chairperson
Rep. Gerald Brady
Paul Boswell, Esq
Dorothy Leventry
Lorraine Fleming
Wayne Holden
David Sheppard

Advisory To:

Shawn Garvin, DNREC, Secretary (not present)

Ex-Officios:

Ray Bivens, State Liaison Officer, LWCF, DNREC

Staff:

Tim Slavin, HCA, Director
Matthew Chesser, DNREC, Parks & Recreation
Robert Ehemann, DNREC, Parks & Recreation
Elena Stewart, DNREC, Parks & Recreation
Craig Rhoads, DNREC, Fish & Wildlife
Austin Short, DDA
Kyle Hoyd, DDA, DFS
Michael Valenti, DDA, DFS
Kesha Braunskill, DDA, DFS
Kerri Yandrich, DNREC, Fish & Wildlife
Pat Emory, DNREC
Kristin Barnekov-Short, DNREC Chief of Staff

Visitors:

Sarah Cooksey, TNC
David Carter
Don Sharpe, United Auto Workers (UAW), Coalition for Natural Stream Valleys
Mark Chura, Sussex County Land Trust (SCLT)
Casey Kenton, SCLT

I. Call to Order/Introductions/Announcements

John Schroeder, Chairperson, called the September 14, 2018 Open Space Council (OSC) meeting to order. He welcomed Council members, staff and visitors. Kristin Barnekov-Short, DNREC Chief of Staff, introduced herself and sat in for Secretary Garvin. Elena Stewart shared that she had gotten a determination from the Governor's office that Dorothy Leventry would be able to continue to serve on the Council if she was willing, which she shared she was.

II. Minutes of December Meeting

The minutes of the July 20, 2018 meeting were unanimously approved.

III. Financial Report

Elena Stewart presented the financial report:

Open Space Program Fund Outlook			
9/14/2018			
Current Projects	Amount	Agency	Date Committed
Garrett Snuff Mills Property	\$7,000	Parks	12/6/2017
Whitehead	\$10,000	DFS	12/6/2016
ABC Woodlands	\$1,835,000	DFS	12/6/2017
JGR, LLC (NVF)	\$300,000	Parks	12/6/2017
Selby	\$425,000	F&W	12/6/2017
Wolfe Neck	\$5,000	Parks	4/6/2018
Misphillion Harbor	\$300,000	F&W	4/6/2018
Cooch	\$885,000	HCA	7/20/2018
Kaiser	\$300,000	HCA	7/20/2018
Deerfield Farms	\$275,000	Parks	7/20/2018
Masten	\$260,000	F&W	7/20/2018
Burrows	\$1,100,000	F&W	7/20/2018
Hamonko	\$55,000	F&W	7/20/2018
Caffini	\$390,000	F&W	7/20/2018
Thornton	\$60,000	F&W	7/20/2018
Total	\$6,207,000		
Available Funds		\$4,132,758	
Current Commitments	\$6,207,000		
Current Balance		-\$2,074,242	
Funding added 12/15/2018		\$9,000,000	
Future Balance		\$6,925,758	

IV. Old Business

A. Completed projects

1. McClements Properties, Fork Branch Natural Area, Parks

Elena shared that the McClements donations had gone through and she was in the process of securing a letter from the Governor and putting out a press release announcing the donation.

V. New Business

A. Council Open Discussion

There was discussion about the meeting days and whether it was better for most members to continue having meetings on Fridays or to go back to Wednesdays. Fridays are the days that the Department Secretaries have their meetings with the Governor and thereby preventing Secretaries Garvin and Scuse from attending the majority of the Open Space Council meetings. It was decided to keep the December meeting scheduled for December 7th but then moving the meetings back to Wednesdays in 2019.

B. Public Comments

Don Sharpe, UAW, thanked the Council for the support of the Ogletown (Felician Sisters) property and lamented that NCC couldn't have done more to protect the property. He also congratulated Lorraine Fleming on the Pioneer of Preservation honor given to her by the way of a wayside at Brandywine Creek State Park. Additionally, he stated his support for Parks to acquire more lands around White Clay Creek State Park.

David Carter, who just won the Democratic primary for NCC's 6th Council District, spoke to the opportunity for partnership that exists between the Open Space Program, the counties and municipalities. He stated that he'd love to meet with members to discuss and come up with conceptual ideas of how to formalize a partnership.

Sarah Cooksey, TNC, let the Council know that TNC had just completed a study that explored the biological, physical and geological components on the East Coast and thought it could contribute to a better discussion on land conservation. She would love to give a presentation on the results of that study at a future meeting. John expressed interest in the presentation and asked her to keep in touch.

VI. Executive Session

A. Discussion of Site Acquisitions

VII. Open Session

A. Council Project Recommendations

1. Hudson Property, Conservation Easement, Parks (~30.67 acres)

Paul Boswell made the motion for Parks to participate in a joint partnership where Sussex County would hold the fee title to the Hudson Property and Parks would hold a conservation easement on the property which would allow for public recreation. The motion was to use \$250,000 in Open Space funds to put towards a conservation easement contingent upon the rest of the partners acquiring the fee title on the property. Rep. Brady seconded the motion. John recused himself due to his affiliation with the Sussex County Land Trust, who would be partners in the project. The motion was unanimously approved.

2. Geffon Property, Killens Pond State Park, Parks (~64 acres)

Lorraine made the motion for the reservation of \$475,000 for the acquisition of the Geffon property, contingent upon the appraisal. Rep. Brady seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

3. Evans Property, Milford Neck Wildlife Area, F&W
Dorothy made the motion to approve up to \$200,000 for the acquisition of the Evans property in fee simple. Rep. Brady seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Next Meeting Date/Adjournment

The next meeting of the Open Space Council is scheduled for December 7, 2018 in Legislative Hall, Second Floor, Senate Hearing Room, Dover, DE 19901, starting at 9:00 a.m.

John thanked everyone and asked for a motion to adjourn.

ⁱ The location of the meeting was changed the night before due to mold issues at Legislative Hall. As soon as a new location was secured the Public Meeting Calendar was updated and emails were sent out notifying interested persons of the location change.